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13 August 1971

State Department review completed

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Approved For Release 2004/04/19 : CIA-RDP79T00975A019700110003-9

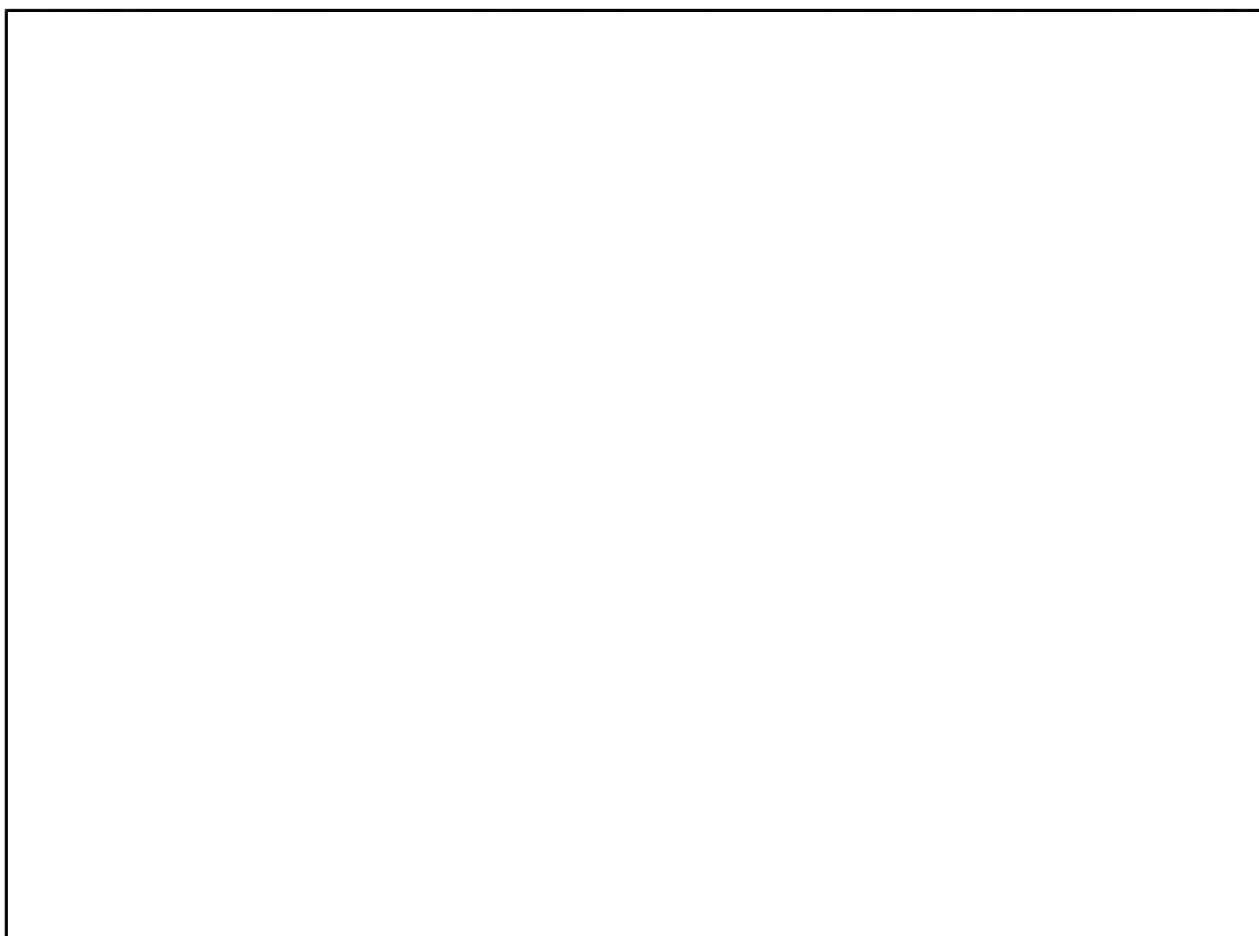
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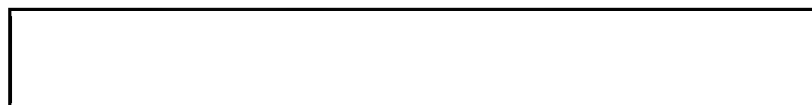
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BAHRAIN: Possible declaration of independence
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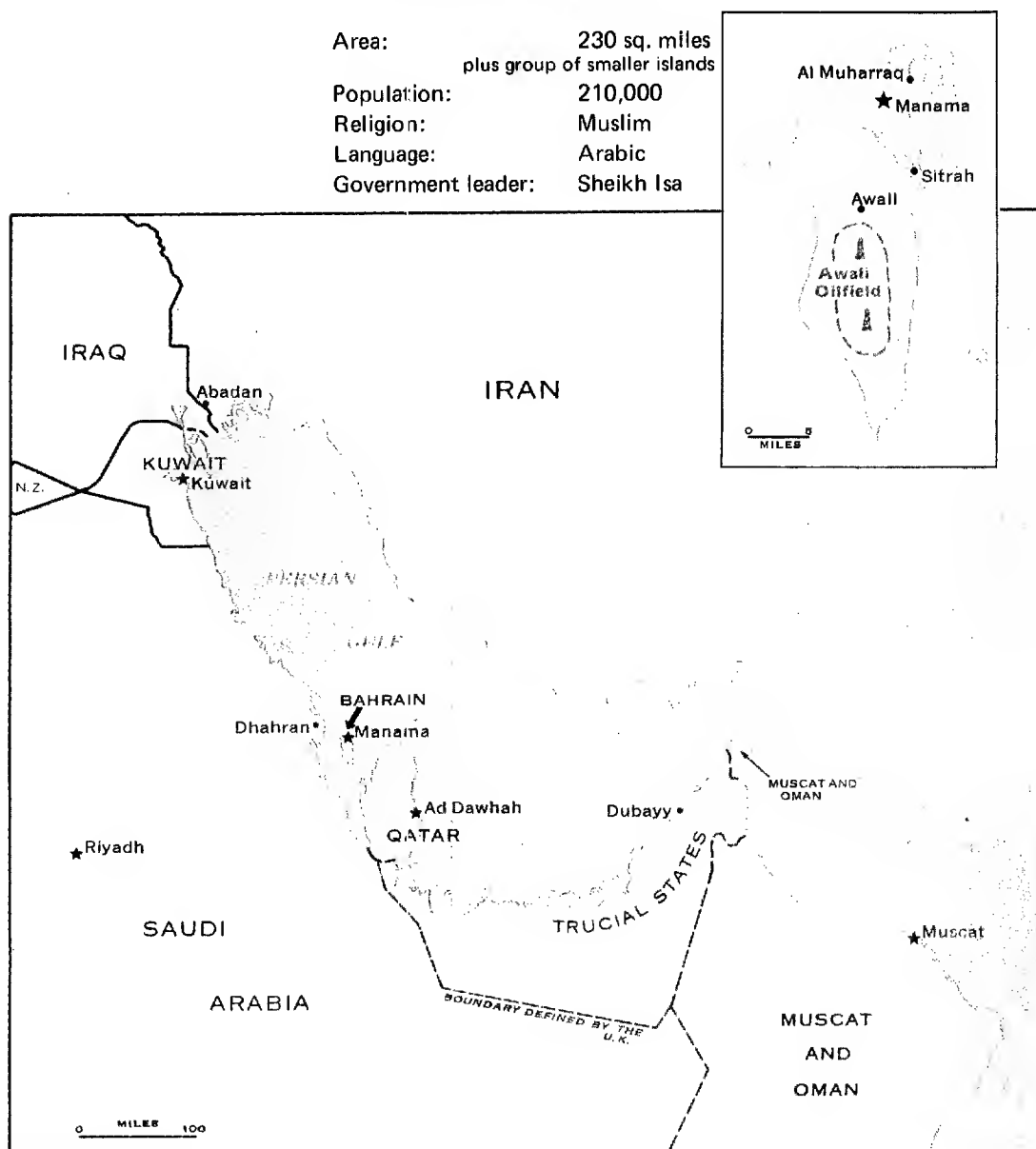


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Sheikhdom of BAHRAIN

Area: 230 sq. miles
plus group of smaller islands
Population: 210,000
Religion: Muslim
Language: Arabic
Government leader: Sheikh Isa



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NOTES

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BAHRAIN: THE RULER OF BAHRAIN HAS INFORMED LONDON THAT HE INTENDS TO END HIS SPECIAL PROTECTED RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UK TOMORROW AND TO APPLY FOR UN MEMBERSHIP.

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BAHRAIN HAS BEEN TOYING WITH A DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE SINCE JUNE, BUT IT HAS HESITATED TO TAKE THE PLUNGE IN THE FACE OF SAUDI ARABIA'S REFUSAL TO ACQUIESCE. KING FAYSAL--THE PATRIARCH OF THE ARABIAN PENINSULAR STATES--HAS NO DIRECT WAY TO BLOCK BAHRAINI INDEPENDENCE, BUT HIS INDIRECT INFLUENCE ON THE TINY SHEIKHDOMS OF THE AREA IS ALREADY STRONG AND WILL BECOME EVEN MORE SO AFTER THE BRITISH WITHDRAWAL. CONSEQUENTLY, THE BAHRAINIS MAY AGAIN BACK DOWN.

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